

## Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



Fairview Middle School  
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### Fairview Middle's RECYCLING TEAM Rocks!

#### The Member

The Fairview Middle School **Recycling Team** was formed in 1999 to raise environmental awareness at the school, involve special-needs students in an ongoing service project, while developing their self-esteem and important vocational skills. Over the years, through a determined commitment to their environment and a lot of hard work, team members increased recycling awareness at Fairview, educated the student body on the appropriate way to recycle paper, and coaxed 100% of classrooms with about 500 students to participate in the recycling program.

#### The Story

The **Recycling Team** continues to be very successful at reducing waste at Fairview Middle School and has brought recognition to the school as a top recycler in the county many times. The team has also been recognized by TDEC with the K-12 Environmental Awareness Awards.

Every year, these special needs students gradually learn to enter a classroom quietly, refrain from disrupting any students or teachers in the class, retrieve and empty the recycling container into the large hallway bin, and quietly return the classroom container to its base with logo facing outward. Over time, they learn to pair up and push the 100-gallon hallway bin to its outdoor collection spot. Each child has overcome moderate to profound disabilities and made personal progress. Because of the remarkable vocational gains they have made through recycling, the parents of these children are now hopeful that they will one day be employable.

Fairview Middle School has added ink-jet printer cartridges and cell phones, as well as plastics to the recycling program. The **Recycling Team** earns funds from the county for recycling, which are used for other projects around the school.

#### The Success

Over the past 9 years, all of Fairview Middle School has gotten behind the efforts of the **Recycling Team**. The special-needs students have developed a strong work ethic, vocational skills, a sense of pride in making a contribution to their community, and have earned respect at their school. The team has purchased concrete benches, planted trees and flowers on school grounds, bought permanent recycling bins for every school area, contributed \$2000.00 towards the development of the now-complete outdoor classroom pavilion, and bought books for the special-needs section of the school library. To accommodate the new plastics recycling program, the **Recycling Team** bought four large bins to be placed around the school. The team also designed the new plastic recycling logo for the school (above).



#### The Pollution Prevented

In the 2006-07 school year, Fairview Middle School recycled 34,575 lbs of paper and received the Keep Williamson Beautiful Environmental Achievement Award for Outstanding Paper Recycling. In 2007-08, 30,525 pounds of paper was recycled. When this weight is compared to 3.8 male Indian elephants (each averaging 8000 pounds), the team members are able to visualize the impact of their efforts.

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